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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
OFFICE OF CURRENT INTELLIGENCE
6 JUNE 1953

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B/ED

RHEE GIVES ASSURANCE AGAINST UNILATERAL STEP

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President Rhee informed Ambassador Briggs on 5 June that he will not make a precipitate move against the armistice or take unilateral action at this time with South Korean troops. He declined to indicate, however, whether he would give his support of the armistice agreement in return for a mutual defense treaty, and implied that no-
things short of a withdrawal of foreign troops would satisfy him.

Briggs believes that Rhee is proceeding cautiously, and probably has not yet decided on the steps to be taken following the release of his views as expressed in the 30 May letter to President Eisenhower. He reports the possibility that Rhee may now be prepared to go along with the armistice as a fait accompli.

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Comment: []

Rhee, having once led the Nation to independence, has assigned himself a Messianic mission of bringing about the unification of Korea. To accomplish this, he would not hesitate to use force, if feasible. It is improbable, however, that he would undertake a military mission at the present time which not only would be foredoomed to failure but would cost him future US/UN support.

State Department review completed

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